

(Copyright, 1898, by Louis Tracy.) CHAPTER XXVIII.

The March of the Motor Cars. When the German emperor crossed the Meuse near Domvilliers, he headed a superb army of 100,000 veteran infantry, 30,000 cavalry mounted on hardy and powerful Westphallan horses, and 300 guns.

In physique, equipment and stamina, in arations made at Vitry. every soldierly quality to endure and to accomplish, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to surpass throughout the world this splendid expeditionary force.

Vansittart, even if he were restored to health, was hopelessly blockaded to the north to the southeast of that historic city. and east by Kreuznach and the army of Metz. If he attempted to fall back toward pressed in pursuit, and could do nothing to

resist the kaiser. In a word, the road to Paris lay open, defended only by the garrison of Chalons, which Wilhelm could swallow during the

course of the ordinary day's routine. The distance to be traversed was 130 and Chalons. miles, and the emperor told his troops that of the sixth day.

In mere statement this task, to the trained military mind, seems almost impossible. The movement of an army numbering 150,-600 fighting men, with a vast army of commissariat, medical and other subsidiary services, at the rate of nearly twenty-two miles each day, has never yet been effected over anything like the distance stated.

But the clockwork accuracy of the German machine manifests itself with telling force precisely in such a stupendous undertaking.

But the great coup that the German emperor evolved in the hotel de Ville at Metz, when he heard of the incipent Paris commune had, strangely enough been foreseen and discounted by Vansittart before he left New York.

It will be remembered that Jerome had set millions sterling before he sailed in the Seafarer. Much of this vast sum had gone in the immediate purchase of a great variety of stores and animals, in which he knew the French defenses to be seriously deficient; but a huge sum was devoted towards the construction and equipment of motor cars solely designed for the rapid transport of troops across country by means of ordinary roads.

In the United States a tremendous de velopment had been given to internal traffic of a heavy nature by the adoption of motor traction. The quick-witted Amer-Ican manufacturers soon saw that the horse would never be displaced of conveyance by the pleasure-loving public. It was quite a different thing where the haulage of good was concerned. Here was the true future of the horseless carriage, and the result of a occupy about 10 o'clock. general activity in this direction enabled the millionaire to readily and promptly se cure the multitude of motors he required.

So secretly and efficiently had his agents worked that large consignments of the road engines were shipped from the states and landed at Toulon, without public notice being directed to the event.

Meanwhile the artificers of Lyons and other metallurgical centers in the south of France were busily engaged in constructing the carriages intended to be used in conjunction with the motors.

As these vehicles will figure largely the history of the forthcoming operations, it will serve to elucidate matters if they are

described with some degree of minuteness The engines were compact, extremely powerful, and so simply and strongly de-

signed as to be capable of withstanding rough usage. Small, broad-tired running wheels, with seven clear feet of axle width gave ample margin for security in rapid running over roads of steep gradient. They were capable of drawing a load of forty tons at an average rate of twelve miles an hour. whilst on level straight roads, and for short distances, this rate of progress could be greatly exceeded.

They were protected by plates of tough steel fixed at reclining angles, and it was estimated that even artillery fire, unless exceptionally accurate, would fail to do them material damage by isolated hits. Against musketry they were practically impregnable. The motive power was petrol, fused to a high explosive temperature by intermixture with a small jet of steam generated by a tiny subsidiary boiler, and it was possible to carry sufficient fuel to last for a run of 150 miles without replenishment.

Each engine drew two cars, similarly armored and running on bogies, whilst a marvelously effective set of spiral buffers gave cohesion and fairly comfortable re silience to the whole turnout, even when traveling very rapidly. Each of these cars accommodated, at a squeeze, thirty men, or eight horses, besides carrying rations and fitted for the conveyance of two guns without limbers, the recoil being absorbed on the quick-firing principle.

At the very moment when Vansittart re ceived ample assurance from the Lyons arsenal authorities that motor-car carriage for 100,000 men was available for immediate delivery, he received the news of the German emperor's march on Paris.

Acting with his accustomed rapid and final decisiveness, Vansittart ordered the mobilization of the motor car army at Vitry He chose this town as being south of the German line of march and consequently less liable to sudden attack.

He ordered the general commanding at



WLATE THE LIVE CURE CONSTIPATION. Remedy Company, Chicago, Municeal, New MO-TO-BAC sold and guaranteed by all drugChalons to throw his whole force in the way of the emperor and to delay him as much as possible, but on no account to destroy bridges or tear up roads, even if retreat be-

came thereby imperative. Above and beyond every other consideration the French cavalry must keep the Germans from scouting to the south of Chalons, else they would infallibly discover the prep-

Vansittart, in his own mind, fixed upon Rheims as the probable scene of conflict between himself and the kaiser, and, as a matter of fact, the subsequent battle centered round Verzy, a village only ten miles

This plan of action once settled, he threw himself into the mass of details necessary Paris he laid bare his extended flank and for the mobilization at Vitry, at twenty-four line of march to disastrous attack. If he hours' notice, of the 100,000 troops selected marched southward he would be hard for the enterprise and the strange means of locomotion which they were to use for the first time in warfare.

The Chalons garrison had been driven from the hilly country in the neighborhood of the two villages, Le Grand and Le Petit Mourmelon, situate midway between Rheims

A glance at the map of this part of he expected them to bivouse in the forest of France shows that the hamlet of Verzy lies Bondy, on the outskirts of Paris, at the end | eight miles due west of Little Mourmelon, on the slopes of the famous champagne country, and in direct line between the Gercan bivounc and Paris.

Late into the night did Vinsittart and his rinicpal officers examine every topographical detail of the locality, falling back upon the personal knowledge of residents in Chalons where the excellent maps in their possession seemed in any degree vague or misleading The most pressing immediate difficulty

to contrive to hold back the expected man assault upon Chalons, while not forcing matters so seriously as to compel the kaiser's main body to turn from its obvious route next morning. Vansittart entrusted this task to the en-

gineers. Before midnight he received the assurance that field works were in course of construction to an extent that would in motion an expenditure of nearly twenty easily enable the Chalons garrison to beat off their assailants until late next day, by which time the millionaire promised them active help.

The motor car army was divided into ten strong brigades of 100 trains each, thus constituting 6,000 men per brigade. With these there were no field pieces and but few Maxims. It was ourely an infantry force, and each brigade had its line of perations strictly marked out, beyond which it was not to deviate a yard.

The artillery was massed in two divisions, which, with motor car infantry esort and a considerable force of cavalry, were intended to be used principally along e crests of two small ridges that ran north and south through the position which, it was expected, the kaiser's army would

Soon after dawn some intermittent firing the north announced that the Uhlan couts were endeavoring to drive in the French cavalry outposts.

They did not accomplish their object, but the French horsemen were handled so care fully that they gave no sign of the presence of an army in their rear. Soon, too, these minor conflicts were

drowned in the sustained roar of the expected German assault on the outskirts of Chalons, towards the northeast,

By 7 o'clock the French pickets brought being in possession of the heights beyond seconds. Verzy to the west.

At 8 o'clock Montsaloy led a cavalry econnaissance in that direction and dis tinctly saw the Germans, in dense columns filing down the slopes leading to the village, But the alert German staff noted the unwonted assiduity of the French mounted patrols, and the appearance of Montsaloy and his troops led to a counter reconnaissance by a field battery and two regiments o' Uhlans.

This compact little body rode forward so gallantly that it was necessary to stop them by some display of force. They would not retire until several guns opened fire on them, and a French cavalry brigade galloped out in the hope of cutting them off.

The kaiser would not believe that any notable opposition could be expected from this quarter, but the symptoms were so dangerous tht he unwillingly ordered a general halt, whilst two brigades of infantry, supported by four batteries and 3,000 sabers marched south to dispel the mystery that hung about the proceedings on the German left flank.

It took a good hour for this opening phase of the battle to develop itself. The Hanoverian infantry, beautifully handled, and maneuvering with faultless efficiency, pressed the attack right up to the banks of the Marne, and did not retire until crushed by a vastly superior French force. At 9:45 the country in front of Vansittart was alive with the kaiser's troops. Bat-

forage, whilst one in every set of ten was teries of artillery were taking up position at the verge of a plateau beyond the Marne, and shells were screaming through the air in every direction where a body of infantry or cavalry could be discerned by the German guards.

The supreme moment of action had as Vansittart simply waved his hand to Le Breton, who commanded the leading brigade, drawn up in the street of the small hamlet ensconced in the leafy hollow close to the French center.

Le Breton signalled a response, nodded to the driver of the first car, and the vehicle moved slowly to the front. Quickly getting pace, it dashed across a bridge over the river, nearly coming to grief in the eagerness, of the driver to turn a rather sharp

Five other brigades stationed across the

Marne, but near to Chalons, started almost simultaneously, and within ten minutes from the time of Vansittart's quiet signal 600 otors, containing 26,000 soldiers, were ushing toward the German columns at a pace exceeding twelve miles an hour, or more sapidly than a similarly large force of calvary could possibly get over the ground. The kaiser and his staff had ridden to the crest of the ridge, where the German guns were at work, and were momentarily expecting the bold stand so far made by truck and bringing its two cars to hopeless the French to wither before the vigorous assault now in progress, when the first of the motors, with its two attached carriages

dashed in sight across the Marne. What on earth is that?" cried Wilhelm with field glasses gived to his eyes. "A running steam evgine!" laughed as

"A charge by the commissariat!" "Perhaps a new sort of military steam

"Whatever it is, it is full of soldiers!" "With a machine gun!" "Another of Vansittart's dodges, ch?"

The concluding comment drew the em-"If it be one of Vansittart's dodger, gentlemen, it will need all our skill to coun-

In silence the distinguished officers present steadily watched the progress of the motor. With even keener interest Vansittart and

alone knew what was expected of this new and terrible engine of warfare. Almost before a shot was fired at it vanced firing line. The officer in command of a scattered company, seeing this

strange object rapidly darting toward him mediate death on the battlefield. from the French position, realized that, whatever its powers, it must have hostile intent. So he ordered his men to fire a volley at it.

Several bullets struck the motor and the cars with resounding clang, but the angle of impact was so acute that the missiles glanced off harmlessiy. And now the Frenchmen commenced fir-

ing in return, wildly, it is true, owing to

the impossibility of taking accurate aim,

but several Germans dropped. It was different when, with tremendaus clatter, and amidst clouds of whirling dust, the motor swept through the fighting line and supports, to come within short range of a couple of battalions drawn up in close order.

Here the French fire began to tell with awful effect. The machine gun, mounted on the left front of the leading car, poured ranks, and, as it passed them on the flank,

less atoms on all sides and the emperor him. | ment of an imperial army corps.

Had he been told at that moment that Le Breton's brigade was one of six then those near him also watched it, for they tearing wildly through the German position from the south and west, while Beaumarchais had completed his flank march the motor was within 200 yards of the adand was on the point of driving the uhlan it is possible that this latest scion of the line of Hohenzollern would have sought im-

> to combat the present danger, shut out from | troops. him all knowledge of proceedings elsewhere.

The Frenchmen worked like flends to In this task they were practically unhindered, as the nearest German infantry had been brushed far from the place by the passage of the preceding cars.

Soon they had the road sufficiently cleared, the two cars were shoved off into a field, and the line of motors again resumed progress, for the German guns were so hammered by the French artillery that it was impossible to secure efficient fire for the main purpose in hand-namely, the stoppage of the French advance.

In the fury of despair the kaiser felt that were, could not perform the task he rehad a destructive influence which could quired of them. The arrival of a small taken place.

fielded. Two guns were wrenched from their | means to execute it. But a flag of truce is rested obtrusively against a chair. carriages, gunners were crushed into shape- | not usually carried as a part of the equip-

veif had a miraculous escape, his pickelhaube From a farmhouse on the road he obtained being knocked off by the wind from a passing a small white tablecloth. He was about to Vansittart, your majesty," he said. As an run his sword through the end when his nerve forsook him. With a cry of bitter rage he dashed the weapon to the ground. Then he snatched a lance from a Uhlan orderly and rode off with his significant

banneret. He did not go straight along the ridge the most direct way to the French center but cut across country diagonally into the valley. By this means he hoped to stop the advancing French cavalry and prevent the horrible massacre, for it could be naught As it was, the whirl and confusion of else, which must ensue if once the horsemen events, the eager haste and disposition got mixed up with the stricken German

Fortunately, he was in time. Montsaloy, riding at the head of the leading regiment, the Eighteenth Chasseurs, remove the debris of the smashed motor. caught sight of the solitary officer dashing down the hillside, and checked the order trembling on his lips which would convert a steady gallop into a charge.

As the courier of peace drew near Montsaloy recognized him. The mere fact that General von Gossler himself carried the merciful signal showed the gravity of his errand, and the French cavalry leader brought his brigade to a halt, the rest of the division pulling up in rotation as the

loud command passed from squadron to When the two officers met Von Gossler begged the other to conduct him at once to a torrent of projectiles into the German his guns, devotedly served though they Vansittart, and to delay the advance of the French cavalry until the pour-parlers had plunge peacefully-disposed nations into the



never be obtained under ordinary conditions.

The leaden shower beat upon the masses of soldiers with the directness of a rainstorm on a field of corn. Whole sections of companies were crushed to the grounddefinite news of the German advance guard a half battalion was demoralized in a few

A company of infantry stood on the roadway itself. The men bravely emptied their magazines at the steel-clad monster rushing towards them with the speed of a train. Then they realized that in another instant the thundering, crashing motor would be upon them. Human nature could not withstand this modern car of juggernaut. Offiers and men rushed dismayed to the hedges and sought to save their lives by flight.

One after another of these fearsome structures came panting up the slope, each spitting fire and smoke and deadly bullets crammed with frantic, cheering, intoxicated French soldiers, half frenzied with the consciousness of irresistible force given to them by the motor, and barely able to obey the impassioned appeals of their officers to steady themselves and fire with anything like self control into the ranks of

their opponents. The first man to comprehend the full cope of the motors in such a battle as that they were now engaged in was Vansittart. He turned to his staff and said:

"Go, some of you, and warn the reserves to be in immediate readiness. Also send the Seventh and Eighth motor brigades to the assistance of Chalons. The rest is mere

The second to grasp the situation was the German emperor. With a cry of fierce rage he drove his spurs into his horse, and wheeled the startled animal into a gallop toward the nearest batteries. "Stop them," he roared to the artillery

officers. "Stop them, or the army will become a mob." With the utmost rapidity, half a dozen runs were swung round to the new front, and fired at the line of motors, for, although the incidents described took little more than two minutes in transaction, already some forty of Le Breton's moving

forts were inside the German position. But it is not an easy thing to train a a large object traveling along a road at a high rate of speed.

Some dozen rounds were fired before one of the cars was struck. Even then the shell | try. only succeeded in tearing away a portion of the upper screen and killing a few of the The car swerved badly from the shock, but did not overturn, and its forward progress was in no way affected. "Idiots!" shricked the kaiser. "Select definite point, aim low, and fire salvos by

The artillerists quickly grasped his meaning. The first volley was not successful because the officer in charge of the operations gave the word too soon. But at the second vitally smashing it bodily from the bogey | ning to emerge.

word of command."

"Ha, that is better! Now we have them!" The emperor was so excited that he leaped from his charger, and himself assisted in laying one of the guns upon the next car, the whole line being brought to a standstill, while the French troops rushed to the task of clearing the stricken motor from the road

Wilhelm didn't know that Vansittart was fully prepared for this emergency. With wild scream and demoniac energy the shells from eighteen French guns, stationed on the opposing slope, tore through

the German position, reporting disaster after disaster, revealed to him the full ex- kindly-hearted American would sanction tent of the fearful conflict raging around proposal intended to prevent useless blood-Vezry between the German main body and shed the bulk of the French forces,

Up to this time, so awfully sudden had been the developments of events, he had if any manifestly hostile move were made heard nothing of the main attack. plateau, Wilhelm at last became aware of millionaire. the magnitude of the disaster which had

befallen him. Along every highway darted the huge motors, paralyzing all opposition, crumpwith his escort, Jerome rode up, followed ling up brigades and divisions into terrified hordes, smiting with unfettered violence their helpless opponents, and utterly est pretext for accompanying him. dislocating the whole army, for artillery, cavalry, infantry and commissariat were

piled together in shapeless masses. As he galloped on like one in a dream he suddenly saw ten of the French motors halt and commence firing shells at a body of German troops drawn up near a plantation, at too great a distance from the roadway for practical rifle range.

"Merciful heaven!" groaned the stricken kaiser, reining in his charger and covering his face with his left hand. "They even carry cannon! Is he man or flend?" General von Gossler, who rode near him now dared to say what every man on the staff thought when they first learned the true position of affairs.

but a rapid retreat to the north. We can still save many of our men by blocking the roads and blowing up bridges, when these devices of the devil cannot follow us." His broken-hearted chief murmured 'Tear up the roads! Destroy the bridges Yes! Now we know why the French die nothing to hinder our march. Yet how could

"There is nothing for it, your majest;

I have forescen all that has happened?" "Your majesty," urged Von Gossler, "may give orders for a general retreat?" His persistence stirred Wilhelm from his

"Retreat!" he cried. "Orders! man! What orders are necessary? Who will listen? Who will obey?

The sight so unnerved the emperor that he bowed his head and cried repeatedly, field piece and fire it with precision at even "My poor lads! my poor lads!" whilst unchecked tears streamed from his eyes. "Yet, your majesty," persisted the other, "we may do something. Let us at least

> As if in answer to this despairing utterance came the sound of sustained firing from the north and west. Beaumarchais' division was speeding along the only possible line of retreat.

The kaiser saw them and made no reply to Von Gossler. He looked behind, to see a French cavalry division ride furiously into the valley from the south, intent upon completing the ruthless work so fearfully cut out for them by the motors, from which, too, long lines of infantry, fresh as though attempt four shells hit one of the motors drawn up for parade inspection, were begin-Then he answered.

> Forcing out the words with desperate almness, he said: "Yes, Von Gossler, we can do something. We can stop useless butchery. Go with a flag of truce to Vansittart. Tell him I will

meet him in the village here!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

Jerome and Wilhelm The German chief of staff was far too good a soldier not to know when the game was

Montsaloy felt that he assumed a grave responsibility, but he was assured that the

Leaving instructions with his second in

command to forthwith resume the charge

by the enemy, he accompanied Von Gossler Riding back to the reverse side of the toward the place where he had last seen the But Vansittart, too, had noticed the flag

of truce, and the sudden halt of the French cavalry. perore the envoy had traveled 100 yards

by every officer who could invent the slight Attired in a simple tweed coat, riding breeches and boots, with a broad-brimme felt hat to shield his eyes from the sun, and carrying no more offensive weapon than a riding whip, Vansittart sat gracefully the powerful charger that bore him on this shore,

but eventful journey, quietly acknowledging

the vociferous plaudits of his gallant troops as he passed. "I am commissioned by his majesty, the German emporer, to ask you to meet him in the village of Verzy, and arrange terms of surrender," said Von Gossler when he drew near the spot where Vansittart halted.

the German officer continued: "In view of an immediate and peaceful settlement, I ventured to ask General Montaloy to defer the cavalry charge he was onducting, and which could only achieve the useless butchery of our demoralized men."

Jerome bowed, but before he could reply

"General Montsaloy did well to accede to our humane wishes," said Vansittart. "Bur cannot meet the German emperor immediately. You must acknowledge, general, that you are utterly defeated. It would be need

less cruelty to prolong the conflict." "Certainly, monsieur. That is why I am leputed by his majesty, my master, to arrange an immediate meeting.

"Ah! Permit me to conclude. The only possible preliminary to negotiations is the instant surrender of your whole force. No Pray do not argue. Every moment is of importance. I quite understand that you personally cannot accept my proposal. General Montsaloy and the members of my staff will ride with you to the emperor, learn his decision, and act in accordance with it. If he is agreeable to my suggestion these officers will convey to every French division my orders to cease hostilities, whilst commanders will individually receive the submission and carry out the disarmament of those German corps nearest to them. This part you must see to on your side. If the emperor declines the battle must proceed."

At the appointed hour Vansittart and the king of France, who had reached Vansittart's camp during the battle, attended by a brilliant suite and an escort of the Eighteenth chasseurs-if any other corps had accompanied Jerome there would have been a mutiny-approached the small chateau which served as the German headquarters.

They were received by Von Gossler, who forthwith conducted them to a room on the ground floor; for the first time, Vansittart and Wilhelm were face to face

The emperor stood in the center of the spartment, dignified and impassive, his hands behind his back. His face was rigid, and although tanned by exposure, its dull pallor betrayed the agonized hours he had endured since the morning. Behind him, in compliance with Vansittart's request, were ranged the divisions officers of the his army and the heads of the military de-

the Germany battery, now thoroughly en- kaiser's command, and at once sought the partments. His sword and sabretache officers broke out into strong guttural

For an awkward moment there silence. Then Von Gossler spoke. "This is M. "Permit me alse afterthought he added: to announce the king of France."

The kaiser inclined his head. "I am at a loss," he said, with even, metallic accents, "to know whether to present my sword to the king or to the man who makes and un-

makes kings." "To the king!" said Vansittart, where-

pon Wilhelm handed his sword to Henri, who gravely received it. "And now tell me your resolves, mon-The kaiser turned and looked

Vansittart squarely in the eyes. "I am here for that purpose. They are brief and to the point. I require the prompt capitulation of the German forces now stationed west of the Rhine, waen, after the requisite formalities, all officers and men will be at once free to return to their homes. I also require you to sign a treaty of peace. leaving the delimitation of the frontier between France and Germany to the mayors of twelve French and German towns, six to be nominated by you and six by me These gentlemen will be asked, in addition, to devise such means as they think fit to prevent further trouble in regard to frontier affairs, both countries binding themselves to accept such recommendations without cavil or complaint.'

"I will no longer leave the question to you, but to your people and parliament." The reply staggered the emperor. Such a course of procedure meant the disappear-

ance of the house of Hohenzollern. The pallor returned to his cheeks as he said: "In the name of the saints, why mayors?" "Because it may be fairly assumed that they represent the mass of the people, without whose taxes and military service it would be impossible for such as you to

horrors of war." The kaiser swept aside this all-sufficient answer. With intense bitterness of tone he said, turning to his staff: "You hear, gentlemen. This the first installment. second will doubtless deal with indemnity." Vansittart produced a cigar case, cut the end off a cigar, and lit it, before he said,

with the utmost coolness: "There will be no indemnity. God forbid that I should fine your unfortunate people because of your blunders." "You are a marvelous man, M. Vansit-

tart!" Jerome, irritated slightly by the kaiser's fitfulness, merely nodded his appreciation of the compliment.

Wilhelm had perforce to continue the conversation. "Notwithstanding your last remarkable concession, M. Vansittart, I cannot accept your terms. It is impossible that the emperor of Germany should consent to expose

of a set of provincial mayors, excellent though these gentlemen may be." "You forget that France likewise submits to their arbitraments. I should have the utmost faith in their collective good sense."

"Pooh! It is out of the question." The millionaire picked up his hat and riding whip, which he had placed on a chair. "Then further discussion is unnecessary, he said. "Have I your majesty's word that neither you nor the members of your staff

present will attempt to escape? Or must 1 place you under restraint?" The kaiser flared out again into animation "It is matterless to me what you do. My unbeaten troops still hold the field, in French territory, too. I will pay the full price of my transgressions. I abdicate in favor of my son. My brother, Prince Henry of Prussia, will carry on the campaign, and maybe yet crush your proteges and disap-

point your magniloquent theories." From the German officers came murmurs indignation, showing how they chafed a

Jerome directly addressed them "So," he said, "you share your headstrons leader's view? You still hold your opponents in such feeble esteem that you believe your armies in Lorraine to be superior to circumstances. Let me undeceive you. To- entrusted with the conduct of frontier reguday your expedition, consisting presumably lations, which shall be framed only in reof your picked troops, was beaten by less gard to revenue and legal necessities. than half its numbers. Only one-third of my men were in the field when you were hopelessly crippled. You have seen the value of the motors in action, and I tell you emphatically that if my demands are not acceded to fully within the hour all my available force will march tonight for the frontier. Tomorrow General Kreuznach will

that you have already found irresistible. What will be the result?" The two men were but a couple of paces apart during this impressioned dialogue. The tubborn Saxon nature in each shone from their resolute blue eyes. Wilhelm's attitude showed that if the vital issues before them could be determined by strangling his opponent he would gladly make the attempt-Vansittart's, that he entertained profound contempt for a monarch who cared little if he brought his country to degradation in order to gratify his personal pride.

be asked to defeat the same combination

A sudden commotion drew all eyes to the loor, which was violently flung open, revealing a German aide-de-camp struggling ineffectually beneath the giant grip of Arizona Jim.

"A telegram for you, guv'nor," yelled Jerome read the telegram and handed it

to the kaiser, saying: "Possibly this may influence your decision." The emperor disdainfully took the little bit of flimsy. He read its contents twice before he seemed to fully comprehend their purpose. Then his customary pallid complexion assumed an ashen hue. He visibly trembled. Even his voice shook as he murmured, "Can this be true!"

"On my honor," said Vansittart. I have no reason to doubt its accuracy." Wilhelm dropped listlessly into a chair, to bury his face in his hands-the slanting rays of the sinking sun, striking in patches through the low diamond-framed windows of the room, showed great drops of perspira-

"I will read it aloud," said Vansittart. And this is what he read: "Metz is ours. The tricolor floats again above its walls. Whilst our attack on Kreuznach was developing, I formed strong column for the assault of Metz, and ca ried position after position with astound ing ease. The gallant troops of France would not be gainsaid. Fighting in outskirts still proceeding, but we are firmly established in the town itself, and in the forts to west and south. Kreuznach will probably make desperate efforts to recapture Metz, but I am confident of ability to

tion glistening on his forehead.

hearty congratulations. DAUBISSON." Not even German military decorum could withstand this momentous news. The staff

hold him off, pending further orders. Have

just heard of your great victory. Most

ejaculations, but Vansittart stayed them by a wave of his hand.

"Now, your majesty, which is it to be? Am I to march to complete Daubisson's coup, or do you accept my terms, frankly

Wilbelm tropped his hands and looked

round. "Very well. Be it so," he said. "But soldiers, not mayors, shall utter the first

that has happened. Am I to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to M. Vansittart?" He named them all individually. Each man agreed, though some of the voices were tremulous with grief It was a bitter sequel to the war of 70-71 for the veterans of

word. Gentlemen, you are cognizant of all

Mars la Tour and Sedan. "Good," said the kaiser, raising from his chair. "I will make the best of it, M. Vaasittart. There is my hand on it." "And with the king of France!" said Jerome, accepting the proffered hand-

"With the king of France, by all means." But they were continental monarchs, so

Wilhelm and Henri embraced. "Now," cried Wilhelm, from whom a great depression had seemingly passed in an instant, "what is the best way to set about

"After your majesty has signed a document briefly reciting our agreement, I will have much pleasure in giving you and these other gentlemen every facility for rejoining your army on the frontier. You can, like me, telegraph orders to suspend hostilities until your arrival."

"And these mayors? When do they meet?" The kaiser did not yet take kindly to the stipulation. It still rankled.

"The day after tomorrow, at Metz." The mayors retired at 1 o'clock. At 5 the same evening the mayor of Marseilles, who, by reason of seniority in years, had been elected spokesman for the others, sent messages to both camps to the effect that the council was ready with its report.

The intense curiosity that prevailed in the breasts of French and German statesmen brought them rapidly to the Hotel de Ville. Not alone Vansittart and the two monarchs, but every minister and prominent official who had the slightest claim to be present, put in an appearance, and the grand salon of the town hall was filled with a brilliant and animated throng when the mayora solemnly filed in from their memorable con-

"Have you unanimously agreed upon your recommendations, gentlemen?" said Vansittart, and the query induced a profound silence in the crowded room. "We have," said the mayor of Marseilles,"

Stepping forward be read, with clear and emphatic voice, the following: "We, the undersigned mayors of twelve French and German cities, in pursuance of the great trust committed to our care, are

unanimously of opinion: "1. That the province of Lorraine, as any part of his dominions to the bartering marked out by a reasonably straight line drawn from Donon in the Vosges mountains to, but not including, the town of Saargemund, shall in future be French territory, the legal boundary to be fixed by a properly constituted commission. "2. That the province of Elsass, naturally

> mountains, shall remain German territory, with the addition of the small portion of Lorraine lying to the east of the line indicated in paragraph L. "3. That all fortresses and defensive works of military significance within the limits of the said provinces of Lorraine

and Elsass be forthwith leveled to the

defined by the watershed of the Vosges

"4. That all so-called strategic railways in both provinces shall be speedily linked together, and joined, where practicable, to the main lines of France and Germany, for the better development of commerce and the promotion of mutual intercourse.

ground.

5. That no officer of the army shall hold administrative positions in either of the

large numbers, nor military stores or armaments collected, within 100 France kilometres of the new frontier line. "7. That the customs and police authorities of France and Germany shall be solely

"8. That in all other respects there shall be free and uninterrupted passage between the two countries." Then the mayor read the

designations of himself and his colleagues. At once a buzz of eager comment arose "It means the dismantling of Strasbourg and Mulhausen," cried the kalser. "We get Metz shorn of its defenses, whilst Belfort, Verdon, and every fortress in the

east of France must be torn to pieces," vociferated Henri. "Preposterous," growled the German officers.

"Ridiculous," cried the Frenchmer Then everyone looked at Vansittart, who had meanwhile secured the report from the mayor of Marseilles and had perused it with the aid of a small map.

Raising his head he obtained a hearing. "I am glad to note," he said with a smile, "that nobody seems to be satisfied. There is no surer sign that these excellent gentlemen have tried to be just. Nay, more, they have succeeded in their efforts. Their award exceeds my utmost hopes, whilst it more than justifies the confidence I placed in them. They have given to France French Lorraine; they have secured to Germany German Elsass. And because they have arrived at a conclusion outlined for them by natural law, they take stringent precautions lest the power of men to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done. Surely they have well acquitted themselves. If ever men deserved honor, these do. In a few hours, aided only by their common sense, they have achieved triumphs which two generations and statesmen and generals, backed by millions of soldiers, have wholly failed to achieve. My friends, think what it means. There are no longer lost provinces or hostile principalities. Let us marvel at their work rather than cavil at its methods. If we do, the whole world will join in our chorus of praise."

Little more remains to be told. Folliet captured Ribou; Arizona Jim shot Hans Schwartz, just to keep him out of mischief, and the incipient revolution in Paris died out as the victorious troops marched in.

THE END.

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by Kuhn & Co. Mrs. Judith Ricker of East Lebanon, Me., 98 years old, blind and deaf, still gets around the house and does her share in

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